

19 Actionable Tips To Abolish A Cough Quickly

Do you feel like just blocking your mouth from coughing so much?

Coughing can be quite bothersome and is usually the toughest cold symptom to get rid of.



When you cough for some time, that means something went down the wrong pipe.

If you cough for a few days then you could have the flu or cold.

If it goes for a week then allergies or bronchitis could come to mind.

But, after 3-4 weeks you will start to worry about other possibilities of something malignant being present.

Now, what can you do to stop a persistent cough that is not malignant?

First, let me tell you that coughing is a natural reflex action in your body to remove mucus, dust, bacteria and other irritants from your airways.

When you cough, the cells of your upper airways trigger your immune system to help prevent infection and inflammation in the lungs.

But, coughing repeatedly wears down on your body making you feel tired with pain in your chest that interferes with your daily activities like working and sleeping.

Whether it's a cold, allergies, acid reflux, blood pressure medications, or other medications, it's best to treat the underlying cause of a cough in order to stop it.

You can reduce your throat inflammation through using natural home remedies.

Do your own research and be careful while choosing sources and brands of natural products as they are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) so you could be at risk of using low-quality products with impurities.

What Type Of Cough Do I Have?

Your doctor can help identify what underlying condition is causing you to cough by examining the many different types of coughs you have with their distinct characteristics.

- Productive cough is a cough that produces phlegm or mucus that can signal that you have the flu, bronchitis or pneumonia. If the color of the phlegm is yellowish-green or bloody then you will need to visit your doctor
- Non productive cough is a cough that does not produce mucus like a dry cough
- Acute cough is a cough that goes on its own that lasts less than 2 weeks which does not require medical attention

If a cough is accompanied by other symptoms like headache, fever, sleepiness or shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, chest ache and makes certain noises like wheezing, whooping or barking then you should visit your doctor.

19 Effective And Quick Tips To Get Rid Of Your Cough

There are a variety of natural remedies to try to alleviate a persistent cough:

1. Rinse with salt water



Salt water is an easy technique that is safe and a low-cost remedy to get rid of a cough.

This solution is efficient at killing bacteria, thinning mucus, and reducing pain, even though it will sting a little at first.

Make the solution at home by combining eight ounces of warm water with half a teaspoon of table salt.

Swish the solution about in your mouth and gargle at the back of your throat for 30 seconds before spitting it out.

However, salt water gargle will not help lower viral load.

Different antiseptic mouthwashes were compared by researchers to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a 2021 study.

They discovered that while several commercial brands reduced viral load, a lab-made saltwater solution did not effectively kill the virus.

Saltwater gargles should be avoided by young children and people with high blood pressure.

2. Slurp warm liquids



Warm liquids, teas, or broths thin mucus and minimize throat discomfort, where the liquids help hydrate you and the heat helps relieve your congestion.

If you have extra cold or flu symptoms then you will benefit from warming up the beverages you take.

Clear broths are examples of hot beverages that can be soothing for your throat.

You can make a soothing chamomile tea or ginger tea is an excellent option.

Ginger is known for its ability to settle an upset stomach.

As it turns out, it is also effective for a cough by relaxing the muscles in your airways.

Ginger root also possesses antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities that will help your immune system.

Make some ginger tea by steeping fresh slices in hot water or using a teabag to get rid of your cough.

3. Have a mouthful of honey



Want to give your tea or hot water a boost?

Mix in some honey to your drinks to smoothen your cough.

Honey contains anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antibacterial characteristics that helps relieve your cough.

Add honey in a cup of tea or on its own, as it can also reduce discomfort and aid in the defense against viral infections.

To get these advantages, simply stir two tablespoons of honey into a mug of hot tea or water.

Do not give honey to infants under 1 year old as it will induce baby botulism which is an intestinal toxemia.

4. Use a humidifier



Breathing in dry air is connected to common respiratory disorders such as coughing.

Making use of a humidifier can help reduce your congestion.

This gadget emits water in vapor or steam form to boost moisture levels in the air that can help thin and clear out mucus.

Place a cool-mist vaporizer or humidifier next to your bed to help keep your respiratory passages wet and lessen the risk of waking you up with a dry, hacking cough.

A vaporizer can also give daytime cough relief, you will want to have one in the room where you spend the most time, such as your office or family room.

Make sure to clean and replace the filter according to the manufacturer's instructions.

This keeps mold, fungus, and germs from entering your house.

5. Use a nasal spray



If your cough is caused by allergies then combine Flonase or Nasonex with a daily allergy tablet like Allegra, Claritin, or Zyrtec.

Treating allergy symptoms is a frequent approach of alleviating post nasal drip and accompanying cough.

This is especially true if the cough is most noticeable when lying flat or first thing in the morning.

A cough can be seasonal or all year, so paying attention to the timing will help you predict and prevent it.

6. Take heartburn medicines and change your diet



Antacids like Prilosec and Pepcid can reduce acid reflux and the resulting coughs that came with it.

If you discover that it is a recurring problem, then changing your diet will be beneficial for you.

For example, you should stay away from meals high in fat, sugar, onions, and tomatoes while increasing your intake of high-fiber foods like brown rice, celery, lettuce, melon, oats, and root vegetables like potatoes.

Each person has distinct reflux triggers that they must avoid.

If you're not sure what's causing your reflux, you can start by eliminating the most frequent triggers from your diet and monitoring your symptoms.

Acid reflux is most typically caused by the following meals and beverages:

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Citrus chocolate foods
- Fried or greasy meals
- Onions
- Spicy meals
- Tomatoes

If reflux is the cause of your coughs, you can also drink a lot of water and eat small portions at meals.

7. Take a hot bath or shower



A hot bath or shower not only relieves tension after a long day, but it also helps with symptoms of the common cold like congestion, coughing, and sinus pressure.

This is a result of the steam's humidity, which helps to open your sinuses and thin out mucus.

Similarly to how a humidifier helps open up nasal passages and remove mucus, breathing in the steam and humidity of a hot shower or steam bath can help relieve cough and other congestion symptoms.

Plus, it's fantastic for unwinding and de-stressing after a hard day.

8. Suck on a lozenge



Another quick and simple at-home treatment to end a cough immediately is to suck on a hard candy or a lozenge.

This will enhance saliva production, which raises oral secretions and can, in turn, reduce coughing.

Any hard candy will stimulate saliva production and offer the moisture required to treat a dry cough.

Ginger flavored lozenges are used because they have been discovered to be effective in lowering your cough and relieving sore throat as it has anti-inflammatory properties.

Aloe and menthol are two more natural treatments which can aid in the reduction of upper airway irritation.

Menthol flavored lozenges that come from mint plants, serve to create a cooling feel almost instantaneously.

9. Use a neti pot



A neti pot will help cleanse out any debris or mucus from your nasal passages to relieve a cough caused by postnasal drip.

Removing mucus from the nasal passages can assist in reducing post nasal discharge and hence improve cough.

If you are someone suffering from allergies and sinus infections then you will benefit from getting yourself a nasal irrigation gadget and using salt water treatments.

To use a neti pot, you will need to:

- Turn your head sideways and insert the neti pot's spout in your upper nostril.
- Then, pour the saltwater solution carefully into your upper nostril, allowing the liquid to drain into your other nose.
- And repeat this procedure on the opposite side for good coverage.

10. Hydrate yourself



On any given day, being hydrated is important, but when you have a cough, it is more important.

Drinking more fluids helps your immune system battle viral infections by improving your blood flow to the damaged parts of the body.

Drinking enough water will help thin the mucus in the back of your throat which will improve your post nasal drip and reduce cough caused by it.

This also aids your lungs in clearing up the waste.

11. Purchase cough medications



You can try over-the-counter drugs especially when you have exhausted yourself from trying other options.

There are 3 basic types of cough medicine:

- An expectorant with guaifenesin like Mucinex helps thin the mucus in your body and aids in its expulsion; suppressants with dextromethorphan called antitussives, on the other hand, stops cough reflexes in the brain
- Cough medication employs a hybrid composition of both kinds.
- Decongestants relieve a stuffy nose; antihistamines for allergies or runny noses, and pain relievers like acetaminophen.

These drugs are generally intended to be taken for a limited length of time and should not be utilized for more than a week.

Also, think about a cough medicine designed for use at night as some versions contain antihistamines which can cause drowsiness which is not ideal during the day.

If you are confused about which medicine to get or have pre-existing health conditions, then talk to your pharmacist or primary care physician, and always check the expiration dates.

12. Sleep on an incline



Coughs sometimes increase at night because laying down flat causes mucus to accumulate in your throat rather than drain.

This causes the cough reflex to be triggered in order to move the mucus out.

Elevating your head will help drain your mucus.

Sleeping with pillows to alleviate your head also aids in the treatment of GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), which can induce overnight coughing.

This method also helps if your cough is caused by a cold or an allergy.

Mucus can collect and irritate your throat when you sleep flat.

So, using additional pillows or lifting your head off your bed with a sturdy surface helps put gravity on your side.

13. Inhale through steam



A wet cough that generates mucus or phlegm will benefit from inhaling steam.

To try this approach, take a hot shower or bath and let the bathroom fill up with steam.

You should remain in this steam for a few minutes or until your symptoms have subsided.

After that, you can take a glass of water to cool down and avoid dehydration.

You can also create your own steam bowl.

To do this, you will need to:

- Fill a big basin halfway with boiling water
- Mix in herbs or essential oils like eucalyptus or rosemary which will help in congestion relief
- Place a cloth over your head and lean over the bowl which will help retain the steam, allowing you to breathe it in
- Continue to breathe in the steam for around 10-15 minutes
- Do this once or twice a day till your symptoms subside

14. Quit smoking



Stopping yourself from smoking helps reduce inflammation by reducing exposure to chemicals and irritants that are detrimental to your lungs.

Smoking paralyzes the cilia, which are microscopic hairs that line along your lungs that help sweep mucus and debris away.

That is why some smokers develop a chronic cough.

A cough induced by smoking will develop depending on how much you smoke and how long you have been smoking.

Removing environmental respiratory irritants like cigarette smoking, dust, and pollen can help significantly reduce cough.

In addition to not smoking, you can also use an air purifier to help get rid of other common irritants such as dust and pollen.

15. Try probiotics



Probiotics improve gut health and they also have a minor impact on preventing the common cold and reducing coughing.

Get yourself yogurt and fermented foods like miso and kimchi that are high in probiotics to ease your coughing.

Although probiotics do not immediately alleviate coughing, they help strengthen your immune system by balancing the bacteria in your stomach.

A strong immune system helps battle against diseases that are causing you to cough like respiratory tract infections.

Lactobacillus and other probiotic supplements are available in health and pharmacy stores while miso soup, natural yogurt, kimchi, and sauerkraut are natural foods that are high in probiotics.

16. Aim for marshmallow root



Marshmallow root is a herb that has long been used to heal coughs and sore throats.

Because of its high mucilage concentration, the plant helps relieve coughing irritation.

Mucilage is a gluey, thick material that contains antioxidative and anti-inflammatory characteristics.

Marshmallow root is also available as a dried herb and as a tea in a bag.

You can add hot water to either consume it right away or allow it to cool first.

The more mucilage in the drink, the longer the marshmallow root extract steeps into the water.

Side effects include stomach distress, which can be alleviated by consuming more water.

17. Have bromelain



Bromelain is an enzyme found in pineapples and is abundant in fruits.

It is anti-inflammatory and has mucolytic capabilities, which means it can break down mucus and eliminate it from the body.

You can drink pineapple juice on a regular basis to decrease mucus in your throat and to prevent coughing.

However, the juice may not contain enough bromelain to alleviate symptoms of cough.

So, bromelain supplements are available and can be more helpful for cough relief.

Before attempting any new supplements, it is important to consult with your doctor.

Bromelain should not be taken if you are taking blood thinners or particular antibiotics.

18. Go for thyme



Thyme has both culinary and medical use, and it is a popular cure for coughs, sore throats, bronchitis, and stomach problems.

This plant possesses antispasmodic, expectorant (mucus-expelling), and antibacterial properties, and it is used to treat bronchitis.

It includes an essential oil (thymol) as well as certain flavonoids.

Using a combination of thyme and ivy drops helps improve your symptoms of bronchitis, cough and overall quality of life.

19. Make use of slippery elm



Slippery elm bark has been used by Native Americans to cure coughs and intestinal disorders.

Slippery elm, like marshmallow root, includes a high degree of mucilage, which aids in the relief of a sore throat and cough.

Making slippery elm tea is as simple as: adding 1 teaspoon of dry herb to a cup of boiling water and steeping it for at least 10 minutes before consuming.

You can find slippery elm powder and capsules in health food stores and online.

It is crucial to remember that slippery elm could interfere with your medicine absorption, so before brewing a tea or taking another supplement, consult with your doctor.

Why Am I Coughing?

Contemplating about what's causing you to cough?

Well, there are several reasons that cause you to cough from environmental factors to serious health conditions and more.

Major causes of a persistent cough:

- Post-nasal drip: Chronic dripping of mucus from the back of the nose to the throat causes a dry cough which often happens after being exposed to an infection or prolonged exposure to an allergic trigger.
- Gastro-esophageal reflux (GERD): This is a digestive condition that is caused by persistent stomach acid reflux into the esophagus. This results in a dry cough from the acid rising into the throat giving you a heartburn feeling.
- Asthma: This is a condition where your airways constrict, swell and produce extra mucus which makes it difficult to breathe and causes coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath.
- Chronic bronchitis: This condition causes you to cough up mucus, have chest pain and wheeze which can get worse overtime and lead to severe breathing problems.
- Treatment with ACE inhibitors (medications): These are drugs prescribed to treat high blood pressure or heart problems. ACE inhibitors help lower blood pressure by relaxing the veins and arteries. The adverse effect of using these drugs is a dry and tickly cough.

Common causes of a stubborn cough:

- Respiratory tract infections in the throat and nose: They come with fever, sore throat and runny nose which are caused by viruses, the common cold and influenza.
- Lower respiratory tract infections: These are more severe viral and bacterial infections that frequently result in a persistent, deep cough and a high temperature. They can cause bronchitis or spread farther into the lungs, affecting the airways (pneumonia).
- COVID-19: A dry cough that doesn't produce phlegm or mucus is a common symptom of COVID-19 known as unproductive cough where you will feel lung irritation or tickling in the throat. COVID-19 is a new continuous cough where you will have 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours with a change to your sense of taste or smell and shortness of breath.

Serious health problems:

- Pneumothorax or lung collapse: Shortness of breath, dry cough and acute chest pain are all signs of a collapsed lung which is caused by lung deflation or chest trauma.
- Heart failure: Accumulation of fluid in the lungs causes cough or shortness of breath.

- Pulmonary embolism: This is a severe condition where a blood clot moves from the legs to the lungs causing shortness of breath and a dry cough occasionally.
- Pertussis (whooping cough): This condition is similar to a common cold having nasal congestion, sneezing, runny nose, mild fever and a dry cough. The dry cough becomes a wet cough with thick and stringy mucus after about 2 weeks.

Environmental triggers:

- Inhaling irritants: Short-term exposure to some fumes and vapors causes inflammation in the throat and airway.
- Allergic rhinitis: It is a common allergic condition that resembles the symptoms of the common cold and comes with a runny nose, dry cough and sneezing.

Less common cause of a nagging cough:

- Aspiration during swallowing: When swallowing goes the wrong way into your airways or lungs, you will notice sudden symptoms like coughing and wheezing. This can also happen when something goes back to your throat from your stomach.

Common in smokers:

- Tobacco smoke: If you smoke frequently, you will cough up substances that enter your lungs and airways. Smoker's cough is chronic that lasts longer than 3 weeks and even though it starts as a dry cough, eventually phlegm is produced.
- Lung cancer: This condition makes you have a persistent cough that lasts longer than 3 weeks where you will have chest infections and cough up blood frequently if it is prolonged.
- Respiratory infections: Smoking increases your risk of developing pneumococcal pneumonia giving you fever and chills, with a dry cough or producing thick yellow, brown, green or blood-stained phlegm. You will have difficulty breathing, where you will feel out of breath with a quick heart rate. Another infection caused by smoking is emphysema which makes you cough, wheeze, have shortness of breath with chest tightness and an increased production of mucus. Long-term cough in emphysema can be productive (producing sputum) or non-productive (without sputum).

If you're finding that your cough isn't improving with the home remedies and has lasted longer than 2 weeks, then it is time to seek medical attention for further testing and recommendations.

When Should I See A Doctor?

You should consult with your doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms with a cough:

- Chills
- Dehydration
- Fever above 102°F lasting for more than 3 days
- Weakness/fatigue
- Yellow or green phlegm with bad odor
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Recurrent cough
- Cough with wheezing or whooping sound
- Persistent pain in chest
- Coughing up blood
- Weight loss
- Confusion

- Fainting

These are indications that it could pose a more serious condition, such as chronic sinusitis, asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, or even heart problems.

If a cough produces blood or creates breathing problems, you should dial go to the closest emergency room.

Takeaway

Coughing is a natural reflex where your body automatically coughs in response when mucus, bacteria, or dust irritate your throat and airways.

Coughing aids in bodily defense like other reflexes like sneezing or blinking.

Most of the time, coughing can be resolved by using simple fixes especially if you can spot the problem like if it is coming from a post nasal drip or gastric reflux.

But, if your cough is also accompanied by sputum production, bloody sputum, fever, weight loss, night sweats, dyspnea, excessive fatigue, or chest discomfort, you should see a doctor right away.

Natural remedies do not work for everyone and do not guarantee everyone's safety.

If you are taking medications or have specific health conditions , then you should speak with your doctor before attempting any new supplements or home remedies.

Resources

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-99866-w>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5790783_Effect_of_Honey_Dextromethorphan_and_No_Treatment_on_Nocturnal_Cough_and_Sleep_Quality_for_Coughing_Children_and_Their_Parents#:~:text=Comparison%20of%20honey%20with%20DM,t%20upper%20respiratory%20tract%20infection.

[https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692\(16\)35512-X/fulltext](https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692(16)35512-X/fulltext)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3604064/>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/that-nagging-cough>